

Members of the State Tax Panel -

I have been alerted by Senator Martin to the hearing to be held by your Committee on September 16th, but cannot attend. I submit this instead for your consideration:

Taxes are, indeed, much too high in our State, and we seem to be driven to claim the top spot in spending and taxation in the nation. I suppose this is to be expected when one party has total control over the public purse for a generation, but it is galling nonetheless.

Taxes, as we know, need to be generated to pay our expenses. I suspect that your hearing will not address the spending side of the equation, but without serious thought to curbing those expenses, it is a waste of everyone's time to hold your hearing at all - window dressing in retail is important, of course, but if the store is empty - why bother?

You will be forced to impose the third punishing increase in taxes in a row this year, because you are addicted to the spending whims of your constituents and to those of the true governors of our once great State of Connecticut - the public employee unions and their bosses. That this is becoming a serious burden to the producing citizens of the State seems not to bother the ruling party, and the Republicans are not yet present in sufficient numbers to counter the addictive trend that has been established.

For what it is worth, may I suggest terminating the contracts of the top three officials in each State agency, and hold the next lower level of management responsible for their actual operation - in the case of the State University 'system', make that the top 100 administrators, starting with the WAY overpaid Susan Herbst. Then, perhaps, you may have a little wiggle room on tax reduction, and in addition hold the line on student tuition hikes.

This is just bloviating on my part, as your hearing will not change anything, you WILL be 'forced' to raise overall taxes again, and perhaps I will be able to attend the same hearing with the same 'concerns' that you have this time next year.

If you truly want to reduce taxation, you need to seriously explore professional management with no constraints from union contracts - there is a reason that government has ended up with the bulk of the unconstrained union contracts in our economy, and it is the primary reason that the spending is out of control. Until that control is re-established, there can be no overall tax reduction

Jonathan Houck
Cheshire, CT., 06410